

Faith & Inspiration

Need to Lead



Photo by Tim Foster on Unsplash



By Vincent V. Marshburn -

Anyone who studies human thought and behavior on any level — psychological, emotional, spiritual, cultural, social — can readily deduce that we, as individuals and as a society, tend to benefit from good leadership. The Bible mentions that people left to their own devices may often fail to find direction or purpose and may even fail to survive as a people (Isaiah 53:6, Ezekiel 34:6, Proverbs 11:14). The letter to the Hebrews in the New Testament

explains that leaders should be of such character that we would strive to "imitate their faith" and would be willing to submit to their counsel (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

Whether within nations or local organizations and assemblies, leaders are tasked with shouldering certain responsibilities of providing guidance and deliberation for the welfare and preservation of the integrity of that body. Leadership can sometimes be perceived as something to covet. It may be typical to observe the drive and pressure towards ambition for dominance and the desire for ascension above others. We are often encouraged — sometimes even coerced — to "climb the ladder" or seek "upward mobility" in corporate or social circles to obtain higher positions

that claim access to more power and wealth and influence.

Scripture presents an alternative and perhaps more subdued and sober perspective on the notion of what leadership ought to entail and what positions of responsibility ought to encompass. A variety of verses express God's exhortation and expectation for those who have been bestowed the blessing of supervising, instructing, or mentoring others. In the Old Testament, Moses was advised to identify individuals "who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe" to aid in governing the Israelites (Exodus 18:21).

The Gospels record Jesus's comparison and contrast between a worldly sense of sovereignty or authority and Godly leadership as a ministry within the Kingdom of Heaven

(Matthew 20:25-28, Mark 10:42-45, Luke 22:24-27). Rather than the tendency to be domineering and autocratic in wielding apparent power over others, believers are called to humility and service, even as Jesus himself "came not to be served but to serve."

This spirit of servitude is reiterated throughout the New Testament. The Apostle Paul censures "selfish ambition or conceit" and emphasizes upholding others above oneself (Philippians 2:3). Likewise, the Apostle Peter disapproves of an overbearing approach and exhorts leaders to be "examples to the flock" (1 Peter 5:3).

At the same time, we are each called upon to exhibit leadership qualities when necessary. In his first letter to Timothy, the Apostle Paul indicates that being led

by the Holy Spirit to aspire to an "office of overseer" (which could refer to something similar to what we might identify as bishop, elder, or even pastor) amounts to seeking a "noble task" (1 Timothy 3:1).

So, while Scripture commends us in pursuing opportunities to lead through service, it cautions us to keep "envy and selfish ambition" in check (James 3:16). The world may characterize a disposition towards humility and a restraint of aggression or competitiveness as a lack of ambition or motivation. Such individuals may be perceived as failing to "fulfill potential" or as "stagnating." There are times, though, when the best interests of ourselves and those we serve are better supported by striving for contentment and excellence in our current position or rank.

In the television series "Star Trek: The Next Generation," Commander William Riker is the First Officer aboard the 25th-century starship USS Enterprise, second in command to Captain Jean-Luc Picard. Part of a first officer's duties include ensuring the captain's commands are carried out, as well as offering alternative options and insights for command decisions.

Throughout the series, Riker exemplifies the best qualities of an effective first officer, helping to keep the crew in peak operating form and stepping in when necessary to assume command in Picard's absence. In the third season finale episode, Starfleet and the United Federation of Planets face one of their most fearsome recurring enemies, the cybernetic hive-mind collective known as the Borg, who threaten to assimilate the worlds of the Federation.

The Enterprise is assigned a specialist on Borg tactics, Lieutenant Elizabeth Shelby. While on board, she proves to be quite an aggressively ambitious and passionately proactive officer. At one point, she assumes that Riker will soon be departing the Enterprise for a command offer aboard another starship, and is

eager to apply for his position as first officer. However, Riker remains resolutely dedicated to the Enterprise and her crew.

Riker confronts Shelby regarding her interference with the existing command structure aboard the ship. Shelby equates Riker's apparent refusal to pursue higher rank and responsibility with lack of ability or confidence.

SHELBY: May I speak frankly, sir?

RIKER: By all means.

SHELBY: You're in my way.

RIKER: Really? How terrible for you.

SHELBY: All you know how to do is play it safe. I suppose that's why someone like you sits in the shadow of a great man for as long as you have, passing up one command after another....

RIKER: When it comes to this ship and this crew, you're damned right I play it safe.

SHELBY: If you can't make the big decisions, Commander, I suggest you make room for someone who can.

Later in the episode, Picard is captured by the Borg and assimilated, becoming a kind of involuntary liaison between the collective and the Federation. Riker, now commanding the Enterprise, faces the unthinkable painful decision of attempting to destroy the Borg ship holding Picard, leaving viewers with one of the most dramatic cliffhanger endings ever.

Leadership can certainly require making difficult decisions and surmounting personal feelings, aspirations, or even loyalties. Leadership might mean finding oneself in seemingly impossible situations at any level of responsibility and rising to the occasion, putting the welfare of the entire community before one's own.

It is important to recognize that leadership is not simply a matter of expecting other people to respond to one's desires or whims. It is not even a matter of assuming that one's own perceptions or conclusions always represent what is best for all involved. And any desire for leadership is certainly not intended as merely a desire to be elevated above or to subjugate others. Sometimes, good leadership is understanding that one is especially suited for one's current position or set of responsibilities, while deferring to the wisdom or judgment of others.

In the Body of Christ, leadership is an opportunity to emulate Jesus's example of serving others even at our own expense. If we ever feel the need to lead, may we be reminded of what true leadership is: that just as the Lord washed his disciples' feet, we should be willing to humbly serve in whatever capacity we find ourselves (John 13:13-17).

TE INVITAMOS A HOMESTEAD CHURCH

PASTORS

DR. JOSE A. SANTIAGO

DR. MINELLI DUCLERC

2351 SE 12TH AVE,

HOMESTEAD, FL 33035

JOIN US THIS WEEK!

ESPAÑOL/ENGLISH

BILINGUAL SERVICES

11AM IN PERSON

8PM ONLINE

Homestead Church

@homesteadchurch

HOMESTEAD CHURCH

TORRE FUERTE

WWW.HOMESTEADCHURCH.ORG

10700 Caribbean Blvd. #301, Miami, FL 33189

Rest Assured Home Care 786-876-1622

Thanksgiving

Giveaway

FREE CARE ASSESSMENT OR FIRST DAY FREE

[www.restassuredhomecare.com](http://www.restassuredhomecare.com)

LESLE BURKHEAD

305-282-9603

List your home with me = SOLD

Call for a free property analysis.

Call a DEPENDABLE Hometown Realtor that will work hard for you when you're buying or selling!

Now's the Time to Buy or Sell

Market is Hot!

FOR THE BEST RESULTS

STAY WITH THE BEST!!